

The *inquest ad quod damnun* for the Northfolk Chantry at St. Mary Castlegate, York (1318)¹

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In 1318 Thomas de Northfolk of Naburn sought permission from the Crown to establish a chantry at St. Mary Castlegate in York. The two short documents transcribed and translated here are from an inquest *ad quod damnun*, a standard inquiry about potential damages to the Crown, which originated in the English Chancery of King Edward II.² Hence, the documents are perfunctory, the dreary stuff of a day's work for a fourteenth-century chancery scribe. As with so many other administrative documents, however, the story behind them is far from boring. In this case it is a story about a *nouveau-riche* family, an unexplained death, a royal pardon and the desire for salvation.

First, the documents. The inquest *ad quod damnun* in itself is interesting because it touches upon many points of legal and social significance, requiring a basic understanding of the administrative functions of the royal chancery, incidents of mortmain and escheat, and the purpose and function of chantries. In Thomas' day, in the early fourteenth century, the chancery was still an administrative office. The chancery had evolved from the pre-Norman office, devoted only to royal correspondence and records, into a body vital to the routine operations of all the royal courts and government. As Timothy Haskett has shown, in the early fourteenth century the chancery had not been divided yet into Latin and English sides; nor was it the dispenser of justice that it would become in later centuries.³ Nonetheless it was an important tool of Crown

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² The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO) C143/135/17.

³ B. Wilkinson, *The Chancery Under Edward III* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1929), xxiii–xxxi. See also Timothy S. Haskett, “The Medieval English Court of Chancery,” *Law and History Review*

administration. The chancery was the first office a person or party approached to begin litigation under common law. As late as the reign of Edward III requests to begin litigation still could be made orally; normally and always after Richard II an original writ signaled the entry of litigation into the courts.⁴ In addition, the chancery prepared and sealed any documents relating to grants of property, privilege, or office, and commissions and charters were written and sealed there. If Thomas' ghost could have followed his litigious descendants into the fifteenth-century chancery (to hear the case concerning the suspicious death and inheritance of his great-grandson's daughters⁵), he would have discovered that, in addition to all its other functions, the late medieval chancery was hearing appeals of common law cases and had begun to hear the equity cases for which it would be better known in the sixteenth century.⁶

Thomas de Northfolk's request to establish a chantry came to the chancery office due to the Statute of Mortmain. After Edward I passed the Statute of Mortmain in 1279 in an effort to protect the Crown's feudal rights and control the flow of revenue in the form of lands and rents to the Church, applications to establish an endowed chantry went perforce to the chancery.⁷ The chancery then directed the inquest concerning the potential effect of the gift to the regional escheator⁸ whose central occupation was to assert (through writ of escheat) the Crown's rights to lands where the tenant had died without leaving a qualified heir to inherit or where the tenant had been convicted of a felony.⁹ Hence the escheator was well prepared to inquire whether a gift to the church from a living donor would result in future losses for the Crown. The extent of the escheator's powers and the proportional distaste for him among disqualified heirs is well attested and surpasses the present discussion.¹⁰

14, no. 2 (1996): 245–313. The medieval chancery originated in the Anglo-Saxon office of *cancellarius* (head of the scriptorium). The office of chancellor would eventually grow into one of great power, but during the early part of the fourteenth century the chancellor was limited in his powers, which were largely administrative and operated in association with other royal officials, especially the treasurer.

⁴ Common-law original writs, which were documents required to begin litigation in the royal courts, were always issued by the chancery. As late as the reign of Edward III litigation could begin with an oral application. Baker says that after 1400 original writs were always issued. J. H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 99–103.

⁵ TNA PRO C1/7/70; Sharon Hubbs Wright, "Women in the Northern Courts: Interpreting Legal Records of Familial Conflict in Early Fifteenth-Century Yorkshire," *Florilegium* 19 (2002): 27–48.

⁶ Equity suits, frequently entered on behalf of women, increasingly were heard by the court of chancery over the course of the fifteenth century. See Timothy S. Haskett, "The Curteys Women in Chancery: The Legacy of Henry and Rye Browne," in *Women, Family, and Marriage in Medieval Christendom: Essays in Memory of Michael M. Sheehan, C.S.B.*, ed. J. T. Rosenthal and C. M. Rousseau (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1998), 349–98; TNA Research Guides, *Early Chancery Proceedings: Equity Suits before 1558*, Legal Records Information 42 (Richmond, UK: The National Archives, 2004), <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/chancery-equity-before-1558.htm>.

⁷ After 1279 no land could be alienated to the Church unless a license of mortmain (from the French *mort main*, literally meaning "dead hand") had been issued. Before any grant was permitted the Crown required that an inquisition *ad quod damnum* be issued to ascertain whether its interests would be prejudiced. See Sandra Raban, *Mortmain Legislation and the English Church 1279–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

⁸ Escheat, from Middle French *eschier*, to fall, occurs when the land literally "falls" or defaults to the lord where there is no legitimate heir. See Richard Kaeuper, "Escheat, Escheator" in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*; Helena M. Chew, "The Office of Escheator in London During the Middle Ages," *English Historical Review* 58, no. 231 (1943): 319–30.

⁹ Technically, conviction for a felony resulted in forfeiture. Baker, *English Legal History*, 239.

¹⁰ Sheriffs and escheators were often the targets of violence. A call for the peasants to behead all lawyers and escheators was attributed to Watt Tyler in 1381. See Nicholas Brooks, "The Organization and

The Crown's desire to enforce its feudal rights through incidents of mortmain makes good fiscal sense. The foundation of a chantry seems otherwise. A chantry had no real value. It was not a building, but rather a salary line (often five marks per annum) given annually to a cantor priest in a particular church to sing a daily memorial mass on behalf of the donor and their family.¹¹ The wealthiest of families could afford to build chantry chapels, but few families fell into this category. Affluent founders might endow an altar, or specify a pre-existing altar at which their service should be sung. Most of the well-to-do had to be content with simply specifying the church in which their appointed cantor would sing. Why would someone from a well-to-do York family like Thomas de Northfolk spend a significant annual sum on a such a chantry? With this question we move from the realm of administration and law to that of social and spiritual mores.

Scholars hold a variety of opinions about the origins of the lay practice of endowing chantries. There is no quarrel as to their monastic beginnings in celebration of anniversaries; rather the debate centres upon the reasons for their adoption by the laity as a form of devotional expression from the end of the thirteenth century.¹² The best answer rests in a convergence of causes: social emulation and self-promotion on the one hand, private contrition and the desire for salvation on the other.

Previously very popular, the founding and funding of monasteries seems to have become less attractive for the wealthy of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, but the desire for demonstrable piety remained.¹³ Edward I's cult of the dead, expressed through his lavish public commemoration of Eleanor of Castile, introduced the opportunity for a new form of elite devotional practice.¹⁴ Whereas only the truly wealthy could hope to approach Edward's building of monuments and chapels, any well-to-do family with enough surplus income as to spare five marks a year could establish a chantry. In this sense, chantries were a form of penitential legacy and an important and longstanding expression of one's rank in society. Moreover a chantry was considerably less expensive and dangerous than other methods of demonstrating piety such as crusading or going on pilgrimage.¹⁵ As the fourteenth century unfolded, many families must have

Achievements of the Peasants of Kent and Essex in 1381" in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. H. C. Davis*, ed. Henry Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (London: Hambledon Press, 1985), 261–62; also Richard Firth Green, *A Crisis of Truth: Literature and Law in Ricardian England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 198.

¹¹ In the early Middle Ages monastic chantries became associated with a regular payment, often a dole for the poor or a pittance to support the mass. Eventually chantries connected with parish churches became a popular method of securing permanent daily prayers on behalf of the benefactor and their family. See K. L. Wood-Leigh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

¹² Wood-Leigh, *Perpetual Chantries*, 2–6.

¹³ On the patronage of monasteries see Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955); Elizabeth Gemmill, "The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Earls During the Reign of Edward I," *Thirteenth Century England III: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, 1989*, ed. P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), 65–74, and "The Ecclesiastical Patronage of the Laity in Later Medieval England," *The Local Historian* 38, no. 3 (2008): 162–79; Karen Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries and Their Patrons*, Studies in the History of Medieval Religion, vol. 29 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007).

¹⁴ On many aspects of her commemoration see David Parsons, ed., *Eleanor of Castile 1290–1990: Essays to Commemorate the 700th Anniversary of Her Death* (Stamford: Watkins, 1991).

¹⁵ On the connection between the social self and observed action see David Gary Shaw, *Necessary Conjunctions: The Social Self in Medieval England* (New York: Palgrave, 2005). In a similar vein see Alastair Minnis, "Purchasing Pardon: Material and Spiritual Economies on the Canterbury Pilgrimage," in *Sacred and Secular in Medieval and Early Modern Cultures: New Essays*, ed. Lawrence Besserman (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 63–82; Jonathan Riley-Smith, "The State of Mind of Crusaders to the East, 1095–1300," in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 66–90.

considered the investment to be worthwhile, fitting well with the sentiment expressed by the increasingly fashionable *ars moriendi* treatises.

Leaving aside the general motives for founding a chantry, what of Thomas de Northfolk's personal intentions? Thomas came from an ambitious family situated in York and its environs. He was the grandson and heir of Martin de Northfolk, a prosperous York merchant¹⁶ who served successively as overseer for Henry III's works at York castle (1251),¹⁷ as a York bailiff (in 1257)¹⁸ and possibly as mayor of York (1259?).¹⁹ Martin de Northfolk used his wealth and influence to acquire property including cultivated lands and water mill in Naburn and a large assart cleared in Naburn forest.²⁰ These lands he bequeathed to his son Nicholas de Northfolk of Naburn with every expectation that they would eventually pass to his first-born grandson. We know that Thomas eventually inherited Martin's estates, but it is difficult to tell from the record if he or his brother Richard was first born.²¹ Something went terribly wrong between the siblings, since it is recorded that Thomas de Northfolk caused the death of his brother Richard de Northfolk. The circumstances surrounding this unfortunate incident remain wholly unknown; however, if purely an accident, it would be unlikely that Thomas would have sought a pardon for Richard's death. Indeed, Thomas sought and was granted a pardon in 1303 at Dumfermline for the death of Richard de Northfolk son of Nicholas de Northfolk.²² The date of the pardon indicates Richard's death occurred before 1303. Thomas may have secured this pardon through military service since the Patent Rolls list his name among those men (mid-1290s) under the command of John de Warrene, Earl of Surrey in Edward I's campaigns against the Scots. There is also a record of Thomas Northfolk acting as a herald for the King in the early years of the new century.²³

If Richard's death was deemed a homicide Thomas' right to inherit his family's lands would have been forfeit; however, from the Northfolk records we know that Thomas eventually held and expanded his grandfather Martin's estates, so the pardon he received for Richard's death was important. Pardons for both accidental and intentional homicide were readily had at this time; Edward I, challenged on so many fronts, needed both the money and the fighting men that he

¹⁶ TNA, Public Record Office, *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III: AD 1242–1247*, vol. 5 (London: Public Record Office, 1916; repr., 1970), 262.

¹⁷ TNA, Public Record Office, *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III: AD 1247–1251*, vol. 6. (London: Public Record Office, 1922; repr. 1970), 500.

¹⁸ Drake says he found the information about the bailiffs in the Fountains Abbey Ledger book. Francis Drake, *Eboracum: of the History and Antiquities of the City of York, from its Origin to This Time Together with An Account of the Ainsty, or County of the Same, and a Description and History of the Cathedral Church From Its First Foundation to the Present Year. Illustrated with Seventeen Copper-Plates*, vol. 2 (York: T. Wilson and R. Spence, 1788), 115. See also William Combe, *The History and Antiquities of the City of York, From its Origin to the Present Times*, vol. 3 (York: A. Ward, 1785), 26.

¹⁹ Healaugh Priory, *The Charters of the Augustinian Priory of St. John the Evangelist of the Park of Healaugh*, trans. and ed. J. S. Purvis, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, vol. 92 (Wakefield: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1936), 157.

²⁰ Yorkshire Archaeological Society, "Yorkshire Deeds," *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 17 (1903): 104–105 [96–128].

²¹ Records of Nicholas Northfolk's activities can be found in the Husgabel Roll of York, various deeds, and the Lay subsidy rolls. See David M. Palliser, "York's Earliest Administrative Record: The Husgabel Roll of c.1284," *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 50 (1978): 89 [81–91]; YAS, *Feet of Fines for the County of York, from 1300 to 1314*, ed. Michael Roper, YAS RS, vol. 127 (Leeds: YAS, 1965 [1966]), 5; William Brown, ed., "The Subsidy: Wapentake between Ouse and Derwent," *Yorkshire Lay Subsidy: 30 Ed. I (1301)*, (1897), 104–107. British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=49741&strquery=Naburne>.

²² Combe, *History and Antiquities*, 3:18.

²³ *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Edward I A.D. 1301–1307*, vol. 3 (London: HMSO, 1808), 171.

secured through his official forgiveness. Thomas de Northfolk received his pardon for the death of Richard along with five hundred or so other soldiers pardoned for causing a veritable plague of deaths, thefts and rapes, which the pardons issued en masse were intended to forgive.²⁴ Having secured his pardon, Thomas de Northfolk went on to a comfortable life. His name may be found as witness to many legal transactions in York and environs. In 1306 he was appointed a member of parliament representing York.²⁵ Sometime before 1317 after the death of his father he came into his inheritance and took the opportunity to establish a chantry.

By 1317 Thomas was a man of considerable standing in his community. While the foundation of a chantry could serve as a private act of heartfelt contrition, it was also a public statement about the probity of the founder made to associates, neighbours, and fellow parishioners who knew the family history well. Thomas never refers to his dead brother in the dedication, but follows the standard form of dedicating the chantry to his parents. That the chantry was important to Thomas is clear from his continued efforts to preserve it. When the property he first alienated to support the chantry was forfeit due to its connection with the Templars, Thomas took immediate steps to put another rent in its place.²⁶ Nor were his efforts in vain; for two centuries, until the English parish churches were filled with Henry VIII's new cant, a prayerful song for the repose of the Northfolks rose daily to the Divine Ear.

²⁴ *CPR, Edward I*, 3:168–82. Pardons were issued over three days and filled several sheets of vellum. See Naomi D. Hurnard, *The King's Pardon for Homicide before A.D. 1307* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

²⁵ Drake, *Eboracum*, 2:107.

²⁶ *CPR, Edward II*, 3: 396. Although the patent rolls clearly state Thomas had to re-organize the funds for the chantry due to a connection with former holdings of the Templars, the issue of Thomas' possession of or connection to the Templar properties is a puzzle that is not yet solved. In August 1312 the Archbishop Greenfield, following the command of Pope Clement V, ordered the Templars in Yorkshire disbanded. Thomas may have held lands as a mesne tenant of the Templars.

Manuscript Description

The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO) C143/135/17 contains only two leaves of parchment, each with text on one side of the parchment. Although they were both produced in 1318, it is unlikely that they were issued together, but rather that after issue they were stored together by the chancery scribes or later added to the same file by the keepers of the public records. Both documents are written in the English chancery hand, better known as *cursiva anglicana*, which is a miniscule hand.

Editorial Practice

Expanded abbreviations are italicized. As the text lines are quite long they are numbered individually. Punctuation in the transcription is shown as in the manuscript. The semi-colon in the transcription represents the *punctus elevatus* for which we have no digital equivalent, but represents a stop similar to a modern end of clause or clause enclosed in commas within a sentence.

The Text of TNA C143/135/17 (2 leaves)²⁷

Leaf 1r

- 1 Edwardus dei gratia Rex Anglie Dominus Hibernie et Dux Aquitannie dilecto et fideli suo
- 2 Roberto de Sapy Escaetori suo citra Trentam; salutem. mandamus vobis quod
- 3 per sacramentum proborum et legalium hominum de balliva vestra per quos rei veritas melius sciri
- 4 poterit diligenter inquiratis si sit ad dampnum vel preiudicium nostrum aut
- 5 aliorum si concedamus Thome de Northfolk quod ipse quinque marcatas redditus cum pertinenciis
- 6 in Eboracum dare possit et assignare cuidam capellano
- 7 divina in ecclesia beate Marie atte Castelyate Eboracum pro anima ipsius Thome et animabus
- 8 Nicholai de Northfolk patris sui et Elene matris sue
- 9 et antecessorum et successorum suorum ac omnium fidelium defunctorum singulis diebus
- 10 celebraturo, habendi et tenendi eidem capellano et successoribus suis
- 11 cappellanis divina in ecclesia predicta pro animabus predictis singulis diebus celebraturis
- 12 imperpetuum; nec ne. Et si sit ad dampnum vel preiudicium nostrum aut
- 13 aliorum tunc ad quod dampnum et quod preiudicium nostrum et ad quod dampnum et quod
- 14 preiudicium aliorum et quorum et qualiter et quo modo. et de
- 15 quo vel de quibus predictas redditus teneatur et per quod servicium et qualiter et quo modo. et qui
- 16 et quot sunt medii inter nos et prefatam Thomam
- 17 de redditu predicto. et que terre et que tenementa eidem Thome remaneant ultra donacionem et
- 18 assignacionem predictas. et si terre seu tenementa eidem
- 19 Thome remanencia sufficiant ad consuetudines et servitia, tam de predicto redditu sic dato, quam
- 20 de aliis terris et tenementis sibi retentis
- 21 debita facienda, et ad omnia alia onera que sustinuit et sustinere consuevit ut in sectis, visibus
- 22 franci plegii, auxiliis tallagiis,
- 23 vigiliis finibus redempcionibus amerciamentis contribucionibus, et aliis quibuscumque oneribus
- 24 emergentibus sustinenda. et quod idem Thomas in assisis

²⁷ The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO) C143/135/17.

13 iuratis *et* aliis *recognicionibus* quibuscumque poni possit; prout ante donacionem *et*
 14 assignacionem predictas poni consuevit. Ita quod patria per
 15 easdem donacionem *et* assignacionem in ipsius Thome deffectum; magis solito non oneretur seu
 16 gravetur. Et inquisicionem inde distincte *et*
 17 aperte factam; nobis sub sigillo vestro *et* sigillis eorum per quos facta fuerit; sine dilacione mittatis *et*
 hoc breve. Teste me ipso apud Eboracum
 . xxiiii . die Octobris anno regis Edwardi duodecimo
 Escrip' examinatur

Leaf 2r

1 Inquisicio capta coram Roberto de Sapy escaetore domini Regis citra trentam die veneris proxima
 post festum omnium Sanctorum anno
 2 regni Regis Edwardi filii Regis Edwardi duodecimo per sacramentum Roberti de Wystan
 Willelmi de Thurakston
 3 Johanni de Stunughberkis²⁸ Willelmi de Bedale Ricardi Halfknyth Willelmi Odesun Stephani Le
 Coupere Willelmi Burel
 4 Radolphi Le Hoser, Willelmi Doranut Thome Le Ferour *et* Johannis de Slyngesby qui dicunt per
 sacramentum suum
 5 quod non est ad dampnum nec preiudicium domini Regis nec alicuius alterius si Thomas de
 Norfolk²⁹ det *et* assig⁻³⁰
 6 net quinque marcatas redditus in Eboracum cuidam capellano divina celebranti in Ecclesia beate
 Marie in -
 7 Castelgate pro anima sua *et* pro animabus antecessorum *et* successorum suorum Dicunt eciam quod
 predictus redditus te-
 8 netur de domine Rege³¹ in capite per serviciam de Gavelgeld *et* non est aliquis medius inter
 dominum Regem *et* predictum
 9 Thomam Dicunt eciam quod tenementa *et* redditus pertinens³² dictum Thomam remanencia ultra
 donacionem *et*
 10 assignacionem³³ predictas sufficient ad omnia alia honera sustinenda Et quod patria per
 donacionem *et* assi⁻³⁴
 11 gnacionem predictas in ipsius Thome defectum magis solito non honeretur seu gravetur In cuius
 rei; tessti-
 12 monium predicti jurati presentibus sigilla sua apposuerunt die *et* anno supradictis

²⁸ The manuscript is difficult to read at this place name; it could be Staininghe or Stainburgh or Stainbury, all of which are Yorkshire place names in Domesday.

²⁹ Northfolk] Northfolkis

³⁰ assig-] assing-

³¹ Rege] Regis

³² pertinens] penens

³³ assignacionem] assignacionem

³⁴ assi -] assin -

Translation

1r

Edward by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to his esteemed and faithful Robert de Sapy, escheator above Trent, greetings. We command that you, through the oath of honest and lawful men of your bailiwick through whom the truth of the matter may be better known, diligently inquire whether or not it will be to the damage or prejudice of us or of others if we grant that Thomas de Northfolk can give and assign five marks rent with appurtenances in York to a certain chaplain to celebrate the divine offices daily in the church of Saint Mary at Castelgate York, for the soul of the said Thomas and the souls of Nicholas de Northfolk his father and Helen his mother and his predecessors and successors and of all the faithful departed, and the said chaplain and his successors shall have and hold the rent with appurtenances in perpetuity for celebrating the divine offices daily for the aforementioned souls. And if it will be to the damage or prejudice of us or others, then to what damage and what prejudice of us, and to what damage and prejudice of others, and of whom, and how and in what manner, and where or from whom the said rent is held and by what service and what kind and in what manner. And who and how many are the mesne tenants³⁵ of the said rent between us and the said Thomas. And what lands and what tenements will remain to the same Thomas beyond the said donations and assignments. And if the remaining lands and the tenements of the said Thomas will suffice for performing the dues and services, owed both from the said rent thus given, and from the other lands and tenements held by him, and to meet all other burdens which he owes and is accustomed to owe such as suits, views of frankpledge,³⁶ aids, tallages,³⁷ watches, fines, redemptions, amerancements,³⁸ contributions, and all other charges whatsoever incident thereto; and that the same Thomas will be able to be placed on assizes, juries, and all other recognisances whatsoever, just as he was accustomed to be placed before the aforesaid gift; so that his patrimony through the same donation and assignment, in default of the said Thomas, may not be indebted or burdened more than has been customary. And the inquisition thereupon, distinctly and openly made, to us under your seal and the seals of those by whom it shall have been made, do you send without delay, and this writ. Witness myself at York, 23rd day of October, in the twelfth year of king Edward.³⁹

2r

Inquisition taken before Robert de Sapy, the lord King's escheator above the Trent on the first Friday after the feast of All Saints in the twelfth year of the reign of King Edward son of King Edward, through the oath of Robert de Wystan, William de Thurakston, John de

³⁵ Mesne tenants: *mesne* from the term *demesne*; mesne tenants held land from a mesne lord who was himself a middle man, not holding the land in chief from the crown. See "Mesne Tenant and Mesne Lord" in William Holdsworth, *An Historical Introduction to the Land Law* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927; Clark, NJ: Lawbook Exchange, 2004), 105.

³⁶ Frankpledge: originated in Anglo-Saxon legal custom; a group of ten men, normally kindred, who swore and oath to uphold the peace and hand over lawbreakers and functioned as a self-policing group. Frankpledge fell out of use after the thirteenth century. See William Alfred Morris, *The Frankpledge System* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910).

³⁷ Tallages: land tax.

³⁸ Amerancements: fines; lit. "being in the mercy of."

³⁹ In the first document, dated 23 of October, 12 Edward II (23 October 1318) the chancery issued an inquest requiring the royal escheator in charge of the region north of the river Trent to investigate whether the crown's interest would be prejudiced, that is, whether the crown would lose revenue, through Thomas de Northfolk's proposal to found a chantry for five marks annual rent. TNA C143/135/17 (2 leaves).

Stunughberkis, William de Bedale, Richard Halfknyth, William Odesun, Stephan Le Couper, William Burel, Ralph Le Hoser, William Doranut, Thomas Le Fermir, and John de Slyngesby, who say upon their oath that it is neither to the King's loss nor injury, nor of any other, if Thomas de Northfolk gives and assigns 5 marks rent in York to a certain chaplain for celebrating the divine service in the church of Saint Mary in Castlegate for his soul and for the souls of his ancestors and successors. They say also that the aforementioned rent is held from the lord King in chief through the service of Gavelgeld and there is not any mesne tenant between the lord King and the aforementioned Thomas. They say also that the tenements and pertaining rent remaining for the said Thomas beyond the previously named donation and assignation will suffice for every other debt incurred. And that the patrimony, through the foresaid donation and assignation, in default of the said Thomas, would not be indebted or burdened more than customary. In witness of this matter the previously named jury being present, have affixed their seals on the day and year written above.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ A little more than a month hence, on Friday after the feast of all saints 12 Edward II (1 November 1318) the appointed jury reported that Thomas de Northfolk's gift would not prejudice the crown. The license giving permission to found the chantry is recorded in Patent Rolls for November of 1318. This license was cancelled in 1319 and immediately reissued attached to a different set of properties. The difficulty with the first property appears to be that it was connected to the Templars and was forfeit to the crown. *CPR 12 Edward II*, 225; *13 Edward II*, 396.